

Flash of Grey

by alicat54

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Summary: Joe West might have been a good man at heart, but, from the perspective of a social worker, a newly divorced-from-a-vanished-drug-addict man with a history of child neglect was not the best candidate for a foster parent. Or. The one where Lisa Snart makes a friend in foster care, and Barry learns how to pick locks. coldflash

1. Chapter 1

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Joe West might have been a good man at heart, but, from the perspective of a social worker, a newly divorced-from-a-vanished-drug-addict man with a history of child neglect was not the best candidate for a foster parent. Add in that Mr. West was the officer who arrested said foster child's father, only tilts the case further away from his favor.

He tried to get custody, however a major child abuse case a few years back orchestrated by a CCPD officer made the city wary about allowing cops leniency with the rules of social service. In another time and place, he could have pleaded his cause with the case worker and won; however here, his attempts at asking the woman out for coffee made her hackles raise faster than you could say flash. Her friend had been in charge of the Snart case, and had a long walk off a short pier in shame when she found out what those kids had been put through. She would not repeat that mistake.

Thus, a young Barry Allen found himself in foster care.

In later years, Barry would say that the group home was not a bad place. He had done the math, and the couple who ran the place weren't

corrupt or embezzling, which was a rarity at the time. However, two people, with one working a full time job, couldn't easily watch all the goings on of ten teenagers.

Inevitably, Barry, the strange boy with strange ideas and a frighteningly acute interest in chemistry, was bullied. He never told anyone in authority, preferring to charge in headfirst to solving his problems, however bruises were telling.

Around the third time a leg casually kicked out to topple the poor boy down the stairs and scatter his books, something changed.

"What do you think you are doing?" one of the older girls in the house snarled, gracefully stepping around the crumpled puddle of Barry, who had nearly fallen on top of her.

"Nothing!" the ring leader drawled, even as his eyes darted around for escape. "Allen just tripped, he real clumsy like that."

The girl rolled her eyes. "Well, next time, make sure he doesn't 'trip' anywhere near me. Got it?"

The boys nodded vigorously, shot one last scathing look at Barry, who had managed to clamber to his knees to nurse his bruised elbows, and darted outside the front door.

"Idiots," the girl huffed. She looked down. "Can you move, I do actually need to get upstairs."

"S-sorry," Barry said, and cleared his throat. He hadn't spoken much since arriving here with his belongings in a trash bag. Whatever little money came from selling his old home was unreachable until he turned eighteen.

The girl tapped her foot impatiently as he tried to collect his scattered notebooks. Barry had managed to maintain his position as an honors student in his new school, and was suffering through both the workload and teasing that came with it.

Once the stairway was clear, the girl tossed her hair, sent him a glimmering smile, and waltzed away.
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Barry was not an unobservant kid. Most of the time, anyway. But even he tended to notice that Butch and his gang of tormentors tended to flee when the girl, Lisa, was home.

The young scientist took note, and made a point to curl up in the corner with a book in whatever common room she happened to be. Not that she was there often, something about her older brother being around, but unable to get custody, yet still keeping an eye on his sister.

Lisa, as Barry would soon discover, was also not unobservant. So when she finally spoke to him, Barry was rather taken aback.

"You can sit closer you know. I don't bite."

The young boy blinked, and shuffled closer to her end of the couch.

Thus a strange tolerance was born.

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"I fell while ice skating," she said non-chalantly, holding the swollen wrist close to her chest.

Barry wanted to question how hard the ice had hit back, but his words were lost in shivers. It was winter, and Butch thought it was hilarious to steal Barry's keys. He had been huddled around his backpack on the stoop for the better part of an hour waiting for the couple who ran the house to return.

Lisa took in the scene within half a second, and rolled her eyes. She didn't have a key either, though that was more because she only came to the home a few days out of the week than negligence. She plucked a pin from her hair. "Here, take this and that paperclip from your homework. I'll talk you through getting the door open."

Barry fumbled to put his backpack down, and snatched the large paperclip holding his book report together.

As the older girl talked him through picking the back door lock, he wondered whether he should be wary of someone who knew this specific skill. Then he reasoned that knowing how to pick a lock did not make someone a bad person, just handy.

The door soon swung open, and the duo scuttled inside. Barry wrapped Lisa's wrist for her, and she patted him on the head.

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"There's this autobiography on Harrison Wells that just came out, and I really wanted to read it."

Barry huffed, arms thrown around his knees, which were drawn up close to her chest. Beside him, Lisa flicked through the channels on the static TV.

Her eyes ticked sideways. "Don't you usually get those books of yours from the library?"

"Butch stole my library card."

Lisa considered him, one brow raised. "You could just stuff it in you bag and leave."

Barry's eyes widened. "I can't steal from a library!"

"It's not stealing if you're planning on giving it back later."

The kid's lips pressed together. "But it's still wrong."

"So's Butch stealing your library card."

"But two wrongs don't make it right."

Lisa laughed. "You're adorable you know that?"

Later, Barry found the book under his pillow, the stamp of the CC

public library on the spine. His hand hovered over the cover, mind whirling with how he was benefitting from a felony, and his moral compass didn't appear to have any qualms.

When Lisa asked him if he liked his present, he flushed, and said he would be returning it the next day. You know, after he had read the first chapter.

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2. Chapter 2

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One of Len's earliest memories is of the inside of a closet. The scratchy pull of stale cotton against his skin, contrasting the cloying tickle of the carpet through his socks and soft pants. His fingers twitched in a clockwork tick he learned to hide as he got older, counting -the seconds- the bottles- the intervals between shouts and slams.

His mother screamed.

That was the last time he heard her voice.

Lisa's earliest memory was of cuddling into her grandfather's musty couch with her brother. The faded blue blanket was pulled up past her chin, but couldn't entirely cover the estatic grin spread across her face at the promise of Christmas, that mythical event which she had yet to experience properly, despite her accumulated years.

Her grandfather had smiled in what she might later recall as a sorrowful fondness, smoothed back her hair, and told her about the forgotten kingdom of Arandell, where winters were kind and magic hung on the window frames like frost.

"Our family is descended from the royal ice cutters, you know," the old man had confided to his grandchildren.

"That's a silly name!" Lisa had chuckled.

"It sounds more regal in Norwegian, I'm sure."

She had gotten her first pair of ice skates that Christmas. Everyone said she was queen of the ice, whenever she glided around the rink. Lisa, of course, took it as her due, some forgotten part of her ancestry reveling in the praise.

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When Len left home, he waited just long enough for his presence to fade from his father's mind, before he discreetly called in a noise violation the night of a big heist.

His father's crimes were splashed across the morning paper, 'Dirty Cop Caught Planning Heist.' Well, the ones he was accused of anyway. Snart Senior was sent to a prison near Starling, due to Iron Heights being at capacity.

The thief made a point to speak with a thoroughly researched social worker, once his father was put in jail. His sister wasn't eighteen,

and Len couldn't take her in himself yet, being neck deep in navigating his way through the mobs of Central.

The woman, old and grizzled in a way reminiscent of a bear who's taking none of your shit, raised an eyebrow. What she had guessed to be a mugger hashed out his concerns about his father trying to wrangle visitation rights to influence his sister, all while holding her at gunpoint in the alley by her office.

She promised she would take over the case from the last social worker who had been handling Len and Lisa's home life. Said former social worker was taking time off for personal reasons.

Len thanked her politely, and informed her that he would be calling her office to check up on everything soon.

Lisa never exactly found out about what her brother did, but she had her suspicions. Never the less, she was much happier than she could remember being in a long while. The foster home was in a quaint utterly suburban part of the city, run by a middle aged couple with a desperate want of children. She shared the house with three other boys, but got her own room as the only girl, so it didn't bother her much.

She only wished that her brother visited more, but, as Len explained, at least one of them should finish high school before getting on the wrong side of the law.

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Later, Lisa's new social worker would be given another troubled child to place.

In another world, she might have given into the pleas of the officer trying to get custody of the boy. However, here, she recalled cold blue eyes silently crying out for protect his sister, and the litany of reports of broken bones and bruises she uncovered while investigating the Snart patriarch.

Her faith in the system had been jarred enough that granting custody of a traumatized child to a police officer with a history of child endangerment and an addict wife who vanished into the ether gave her pause.

When she learned that Joe West was also the officer who arrested the boy's father, she denied him custody. Who knows how traumatic it might have been for a boy to live with the man who arrested his father for killing his mother. Barry Allen did not need a constant reminder of that day, the social worker decided, before sending him to the nicest foster home she could.

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"Lisa, you should be in school," Len said, voice slightly muffled as he spoke through his pillow into the receiver.

"Well hello to you too," his sister snarked back. "And might I add that you sound like you've been run over by a truck. You weren't, were you?"

The young man sighed, curling further under his covers. "Not this week. I was just working late. How's class? You still flunking

chemistry?"

"No." Lisa drew out the word in an implicating manner, causing her brother to muffle a smile.

"Really."

She huffed. "You don't believe me Lenny? I'm hurt!" Her voice turned more natural. "No, but I really am doing better. This adorable little nerd moved into the house. He's my new study buddy!"

The thief hummed. "Just don't traumatize the kid too much."

"You know I don't break the toys I like."

Len hummed tiredly.

His sister chuckled. "You still coming to visit me next week?"

"Of course."

"Good! Could you pick me up at the house?"

"Lisa, you know I can't do that."

"I know, you don't want work following you, bla bla bla. But, please? Just this once?"

A quiet smile pulled the corners of the thief's face. "Hm, no. Take the bus."

"Come on, public transport in this city sucks! Please? I want to show you that my friend does exist, despite all you say to the contrary."

"Good night Lisa."

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The first time Len went to Iron Heights, his cell mate was a life timer in for murder. Initially that put the young man on edge, knowing first hand how desperation can turn a body to desperate acts. However, his cellmate kept to himself for the most part.

Then Len got stabbed in the hall by one of Santini's goons. He felt his lung puncture, and blood start to leak into his mouth as his body struggled for air. Vision swimming, he vaguely felt someone pull the goon off of him. There was a dull thud of fist hitting flesh, then compressing pressure against his side, before he passed out.

When the thief was let out of intensive care, the first thing he did was make sure his attacker wouldn't be going in for another hit. The second thing he did was confront his cellmate.

"I read your file. You were a doctor."

"Yes," the older man said, calmly reading a paperback on his bunk.

"A guy with your skills could easily be living comfortably in here." The question hung heavily in his tone.

The old man sighed, and shut his book. "I have no desire to join a gang."

"Well, Doc, with the stunt you did, pulling that Santini guy off me, you really might want to consider getting yourself some protection."

Doc smiled, wearily. "I think I'll be ok. Thank you though."

Later, when Len saw a goon tailing the Doc with ill intent in the yard, he discreetly signaled Mick to follow, and made his way there first.

"Hey there Doc." Len smirked, sitting beside the older man on the bench. "Read anything interesting lately?"

Mick remained standing, arms crossed, glaring at anything which dared to come close. The goon looked properly terrified, and casually changed his course to the opposite end of the yard.

Doc blinked, roused from his reverie of words. "Hello. Yes, my son sent me a book he liked for Christmas. He's going to try and visit next week, so I want to finish it and let him know what I thought."

A complicated twisting emotion brought Len's brows closer together. "You close?"

"We try to be, given the circumstances. Barry's a good kid."

Blue eyes turned calculating. "Would you want to get out and see him more often?"

The doctor's attention turned fully on his cellmate. "Yes, and I have hope that one day they'll realize I'm innocent, and I'll be able to."

"It's been years, Doc. If the system cared, you would be out by now."

Surgeon's hands ran down the book's spine. "That's why they call it hope, Leonard."

"Len." The thief gestured over his shoulder. "And that's Mick."

"A pleasure to meet you both. I'm Henry."
>...<p>

Mick and Henry got along like a house on fire, which from the arsonist's perspective was fabulous.

The doctor regarded his sudden companions with politely careful confusion, but after a few weeks of sharing lunch tables and yard time, allowed himself more than casual responses.

As Len listened to the Doc regale them with his son's latest antics at the science fair, he wondered if this was how every parent was meant to feel about their children. His thoughts took a sharp downward spiral from that point, and he cut them off before his

distaste became noticeable.

Much later, when Len's carefully sculpted plans came into fruition, he held out his hand, and gave his tentative ally an offer.

"You coming Doc?" Len said, foot halfway out of the cell door.

Henry shook his head. "You better knock me out so they don't think we were conspiring together. I don't want to have to turn you in, kid."

The thief did not frown, though a ponderously confused expression curled the edges of his features for a flash, before vanishing under cool apathy. "If you're sure," he said, before slamming his fist against the back of the doctor's skull.

As he and Mick hustled into the back of the getaway car, Len briefly hoped Henry got to be with his son again, but he knew the world wasn't that kind.

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3. Chapter 3

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>Sept 1 2003
To: icequeen230 mail
>From: impossibear mail<p>

You realize I'm never letting you set up an email account for me again, right?

...

>Sept 5 2003
To: impossibear mail
>From: icequeen230 mail<p>

My laptop, my whims. And before you ask, it was a present from my big brother so we could keep in touch while I'm away.

...

>Sept 7 2003
To: icequeen230 mail
>From: impossibear mail<p>

Yes, now that you can legally take charge of your own life, you go running to join the Russian circus.

Sept 25 2003

>To: impossibear mail
From: icequeen230 mail

It's an ice show, not the circus. And, hey, this is the closest I can get to training in hard core Russian ballet. I need an edge if I want to make it to the Olympics!

Speaking of beauty before age, how's it feel to finally be a teenager? Did you get the present I sent? If Butch stole your mail again, I can make a call and have him taken care of.

...

>Sept 29 2003
To: icequeen230 mail
>From: impossibear mail<p>

:) Thanks for the card! But, you know you don't have to send me cash, I'm ok. Detective West stops by and gives me an allowance when he takes me and Iris out for lunch on the weekends. You should be saving up to come visit me!

...

>Oct 15 2003
To: impossibear mail
>From: icequeen230 mail<p>

That's your birthday present, dummy. You should be proud, that was straight from my first paycheck and everything.

And that cop's still hanging around? That's a little creepy, I mean, isn't he the guy who arrested your dad?

Speaking of, you still thinking about going into forensics to help him?

...

>June 25 2004
To: icequeen230 mail
>From: impossibear mail<p>

Saw the flyers for your new show! Do you seriously have to wear that much gold, or is it just for taking poster pictures?

Sorry I can't make it to this one (even if it is only two states away :P), but I'm glad your brother made it to your last one in California! Did he seriously fill the dressing room with roses? That's hilarious! (Come on, you can't be mad that he's proud of you. If I had a little sister I would embarrass the heck out of her. That is not an invitation for you to do that to me, btw.)
>...<p>

Nov 7 2006

>To: impossibear mail
From: icequeen230 mail

That jerk at school still giving you trouble? I'm pretty sure my brother's in Central next week. Just say the word, and I'll make a call to get that cleaned up for you (no matter how many times you tell me not to, I will always still worry).

So, college? You sure have the brains for it, so go! Though, I think you should really consider going somewhere other than CCU. I know you want to be close to see your dad, but you shouldn't let that limit you. Take it from someone who's traveled the world, it's worth seeing. ;)

But yeah, I got a deal with this rink in New York to be on their team for qualifiers next year. I'll get the gold this year for sure! (fingers crossed!)

...

>May 20 2008
To: icequeen230 mail
>From: impossibear mail<p>

Sorry about the Olympics. Are you going to be ok? I know you said you managed to convince your brother to help you find a job, but I'm still worried...

...

>Dec 13 2009
To: impossibear mail
>From: icequeen230 mail<p>

Merry Christmas! I sent a card to your dorm, and it contains your combined Christmas and graduation gift (don't ask where it came from).

Yeah, the job in Starling was a bust, but that place is crazy (not Gotham crazy, but that's Gotham). I'm thinking about going west again, so I'll send you a pic of the Pacific when I see it. :)

But really, CCPD? Barry, you could be literally anywhere but Central. You're wasted in that place.
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4. Chapter 4

Detective West had always been something of a fixture in Barry's life, inviting the poor kid over on holidays, and always sending a birthday card tucked into the cover of a nice book.

Of course the books became more and more of a heartfelt gesture than anything aligning with Barry's interests as his intellect skewed into uncharted scientific territories, but it was the thought that counted.

Personally, Barry thought the guy felt guilty for arresting his dad. Not that he didn't like Detective West. On the contrary, he saw the guy like a quirky uncle: not someone he would introduce a significant other to, but definitely on the Thanksgiving dinner roster.

In any case, Barry would always be grateful for the recommendation when he applied to be one of the CCPD's forensic scientists.

His life, with its tiny apartment across town and perpetually late arrivals to work, seemed to be falling into place. He got promoted to assistant forensic scientist, meaning he was put on the field for cases instead of being cooped up in the lab for processing work. Joe finally stopped hinting at his daughter being single every time he invited Barry over to Sunday dinner. He even got to see his father more often, now that he had full control over his own work schedule.

Then the lightning struck.

And he was left in the dark.
>...<p>

Waking up with superpowers was the strangest experience of Barry's life, second only to discovering he also now had abs.

He had always wanted to be a hero as a kid; always wanted someone to keep the bullies off his back and catch the thing that killed his mother. Lisa had always laughed at him, until he pointed out that going for the Olympics was just as far fetched of an aspiration.

Transitioning from mild mannered forensic scientist to speed demon wasn't as bad as he thought it would be. Joe noticed something off in

his behavior at first, but the older police officer was easily placated by Barry's excuses, not really knowing the kid well enough to detect his deflections. Because while Barry could not lie with a straight face to save his life, he could twist the truth and deflect like nobody's business.

Then other metas started showing up.

Now, Barry still had faith in the justice system. That was one of the main reasons why he never submitted any of his correspondences with Lisa for evidence, nor did he accept any of her offers of work, before he started with the CCPD.

So imprisoning people without a trial weighed like a spike in his chest.

But...Nimbus was literally a poisonous ball of gas. The police didn't even know about metas, despite Iris starting up a blog on them. They weren't equipped to handle them.

So Barry buried that little ball of malcontent. For now.

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One double sided coin to super speed was the enhanced metabolism. On the one hand, poison usually sped through his system too fast to do much harm. On the other, he was always hungry.

In a different world, Barry might have not have had to worry about paying for his apartment, say if he was living with a man who had raised him since childhood. However, in this world, the speedster couldn't supplement his fridge with the spare income. He couldn't ask Cisco for more of his high calorie bars, as those tasted terrible, and Star Labs was suffering a bit in the funding department, since all of their military contracts got cancelled.

So, a few times a week, Barry would speed through a big chain supermarket after hours to fill his stomach. He never took more than he needed, and he never hit the same place more than once a month.

His small heists reminded him of the times Lisa would sneak candy bars into the group home to share with him. Smiling to himself, Barry picked up a box of mars bars to mail to her for her up coming birthday, taking special care to show the un-rung price tag still stuck to the side.

She probably would find it hilarious.

>...<p>

Never having stopped a jewelry heist before, Barry wondered whether he should try to hunt down the thieves or wait till they struck again.

He raced through the criminal files, trying to find a face which matched the one from the thief at the truck. He did not technically have the authority to be in these records, being only an assistant in the forensics department and not a detective or working officer, but what was super speed for if not to be utilized for crime solving?

Eventually he picked up a black binder, and there he was. "Leonard? That's just as bad as Bartholomew." A sound in the corridor prompted the speedster to dash back to his lab, files meticulously returned to their proper shelves.

Later, while doing a background check of his thief on the CCPD open access databases, he swore. Logging onto a nearly unused email account, he scrolled through the years of history.

When he found mention of, 'Lenny being such an over protective big brother again', his curses would have caused a sailor to double take.

"Oh god, what am I gonna tell Lisa if I get her brother arrested?" he moaned, pressing his face to his palm.
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Luckily for Barry's emotional status, Leonard Snart turned out to be a complete ass, so he didn't feel guilty at all for trying to punch the guy in the face.
>...<p>

5. Chapter 5

In the bowels of Star Labs, the Flash contemplated the Weather Wizard pacing his glass prison like a tiger.

"Why do you want to kill Detective West so bad?"

Mark scowled. "What's it to you?"

"Just curious."

"And if I satisfy your curiosity, you'll let me go, is that it?"

"No, you tried to kill a lot of people just to get to one man. But what else have you got to do in there?"

The elemental huffed. "And who's fault is that?"

"Answer my question, and I'll get you something to entertain yourself with."

Mark crossed his arms. "He killed my brother. I'm getting revenge."

"And you don't care who you go through to get it? How many people's brothers you might have killed?"

"You don't get it!" Mark snarled. "He was the only family I had, and then he was gone, just because some dumb cop-"

"Was doing his job."

"That doesn't matter! You just don't get it! He was my family!"

The Flash crossed his arms. "You're wrong, I do get it. Hell, I get

it more than you know. My father was framed for the murder of my mother when I was eleven. Everything I had was gone in," he smirked deprecatingly, "in a flash. For a long time, I didn't have anyone to hate but the guy who arrested my father, because everyone kept saying the guy who really killed my mother didn't exist."

He looked through the glass at Mark, who's pacing had stilled. "If I let myself hang onto that anger longer than I did, it wouldn't have done anything but hurt me and everyone around me. I get where you're coming from, because if I had had these powers back then, nothing could have stopped me from-

Barry turned away from the glass. "The important thing is I didn't."

He took a steadying breath, before fixing his eyes on the Weather Wizard. "Now, I don't care that you wanted revenge. I don't even really care that it was Detective West you went after- he's a cop and can take care of himself. What I care about is your complete disregard of the bystanders in your way. Central is MY city. And the day you get out of here, I want you to remember that in MY city you play by MY rules, which means no innocents gets hurt."

He slammed an electric palm onto the glass. "Because once one of us starts playing for keeps, that means both of us can. Get it?"

Mark nodded, face drained of blood.

"Good," the Flash snarled. His demeanor eased fractionally back to polite. "Thanks for answering my question. I'll be sure to tell Cisco to get you a tennis ball or something to play with."
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After his little chat with the Weather Wizard, Barry found himself in desperate need of a drink, despite the intoxicant's lack of effect on his person. It was the principle of the thing.

The night was going well, with he and Cisco laughing over a joke, when a blonde minks sidled up to his side.

Barry choked on his drink. "Lisa?"

The blonde tilted her head coyly. "I'm sorry, I think you have the wrong-" Her eyes met his. "Barry?"

Cisco looked between the two, pulling his drink closer to his chest. "You two know each other?"

The forensic scientist laughed. "Yeah, sorry. Cisco, this is Lisa. We grew up together." He turned to the older woman. "What are you doing back in town? I thought you were still with that figure skating troupe, the Italian one?"

He canted his words in a way to indicate he didn't mean figure skating at all.

She shrugged, slinking into a seat between the two men. "The job didn't pan out, so I broke it off with them to travel around a bit." She smiled disarmingly at the bar tender as he handed her a martini. "But enough about me, what about you? Still running after the

impossible?"

Barry laughed. "You could say that."

"You could say some of it's been chasing back," Cisco cut in, sticking out a hand. "Hi I'm Cisco!"

Lisa's smile turned teasing, though the corners of her eyes crinkled in thought. "I'm Lisa," she said, taking his gracefully.

"Why are you back in Central?" Barry asked sipping on a whiskey, more for politeness sake, since he couldn't get drunk anymore.

"Visiting family."

The speedster snorted. "Yeah, I met your brother a while back. He's a jerk."

A witty reply was half way past her golden lips, when Lisa paused. Her eyes glided from her childhood friend to his dark haired companion and back again, ticking with the constant whirling analysis she inherited from her brother. Half a breath stuttered in her lungs like a gasp, and she took a recovering sip of her drink.

The two boys beside her continued to laugh and jab at each other, but Lisa's mind was several blocks away in a room where a pyro and an aspiring don plotted.

She downed the rest of her drink. "Let's get out of here," she stated.

"What?" Cisco's cheeks turned pink.

Barry, more used to her spontaneous whims, shrugged, and gulped his whiskey. "Sure, where to?"

"It's a surprise, now come on!"

She led the laughing duo out into the street and hailed a cab. Her smile never left her face, up until she unlocked the door.

Leaning close to Barry's ear, she hissed, "I'm sorry, I won't let you get hurt."

The speedster frowned in confusion, before the door shut, and a drawling voice filled the quiet room.

"Now, what are your intentions towards my sister?"

Lisa glided past the duo into the room. "Lenny, this is my friend Barry, the one I've always told you about? And this is his friend Cisco." Lisa's light tone broke no funny business. "Play nice."

The scientist's eyes widened. "Oh my god, you're Captain Cold!"

Barry sighed resignedly and flopped on the ornamental couch. "And I thought this day couldn't get any better after the tidal wave."

Len's eyes narrowed as his gaze flicked between the two men and his sister, who shot him an imperious golden glare.

"Well, this makes things interesting, doesn't it?" Cold turned to the speedster. "Barry, nice to meet you. Wish it could have been under better circumstances."

Barry lifted his head enough to glare, before flopping back onto the couch.

Lisa rolled her eyes and flopped down beside him, just out of reach. "Come on Barry, haven't you always been asking to meet my family?"

Cisco stood in the middle of the room, unsure where to put his hands. "What's going on? Why do you know Cold's sister?"

Barry folded over into a sitting position, elbows on his knees. Taking a fortifying breath, he stared straight into his friend's eyes, an apology proffered in their depths. "We grew up together in the same foster home."

"And you didn't think to mention it, what with," Cisco's hands flailed at the thief in the room. "Everything?"

"It didn't seem relevant."

"Well it seems kind of relevant now, Barry!"

"Not to break up your little domestic dispute," Len cut in, "But we have some business to discuss." Mick loomed in the shadows like a fiery specter. Len's smirk, if anything, became more smug. "So here's the deal, you make us new guns, and you both get to walk out of here alive."

Barry shared a look with Cisco. The dark haired scientist looked terrified, but minutely shook his head. The speedster untended his muscles. If Cisco thought The Flash's secret identity was worth protecting, then Barry would trust him to get them out of this situation.

>...<p>

End
file.